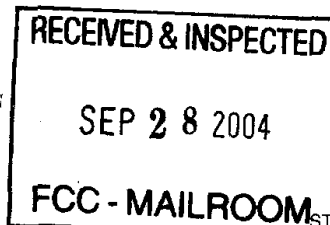




THOMAS L. WELCH
CHAIRMAN

STATE OF MAINE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
242 STATE STREET
18 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0018



STEPHEN L. DIAMOND
SHARON M. REISHUS
COMMISSIONERS

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL September 24, 2004

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Portals II
445 12th Street, SW
Suite TW-A325
Washington, DC 20554

Irene Flannery
Universal Service Administrative Company
2120 L. Street, NW - Suite 600
Washington, DC 20037

Re: Docket No. 96-45, Certification Letter Pursuant to the requirements of 47 CFR
§ 54.313 and 54.314, for the year 2005

Dear Ms. Dortch and Ms. Flannery:

On November 2, 1999, the FCC adopted a mechanism to provide high-cost support to non-rural carriers. *In the Matter of Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service*, Ninth Report and Order and 18th Order on Reconsideration, CC Docket No. 96-45 (FCC 99-306), released November 2, 1999) (Non-Rural USF Order). That Order requires states to certify by October 1, 2003, that the non-rural carrier(s) in their jurisdiction will use the federal support in compliance with section 254(e) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996. This certification letter is being submitted to satisfy that requirement.

In accordance with the requirements of that Order, the Maine Public Utilities Commission certifies that all the federal high-cost funds provided to our non-rural company, Verizon-Maine will be used in a manner consistent with the requirements of 47 U.S.C. § 254(e). To the best of our knowledge, all federal high-cost support will be used only to support those services for which the support is intended. In addition, pursuant to the requirements of § 54.316, we certify that rates in the rural areas of our non-rural company are reasonably comparable to urban rates nationally because they are below the nationwide urban rate benchmark safe harbor.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Joel Shifman at joel.shifman@maine.gov or at (207)287-1381.

Sincerely,

Dennis L. Keschl
Administrative Director

DLK/llp



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